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ABSTRACT

Written for sixth grade students in the Geneva Public Schools (Geneva, New York) and for their parents, this booklet provides general and specific information to prepare them for a 3-day outdoor field experience that is part of the sixth grade curriculum in outdoor studies. The booklet begins with a definition of environmental education and a rationale for field experiences as a means of enhancing the school curriculum. A personal essay describes the Rogers Environmental Education Center (site of the 3-day field experience)--its history, philosophy, and facilities. The essay covers the ecological features of the 75 acre site, the trails and exhibits, and the facilities of the education building which include laboratories, library, exhibits, and meeting room. It provides examples of student activities at the site and mentions the preparation and follow-up activities that accompany the field experience. Additional material includes maps of the area, detailed schedules of student activities, transportation information, and a list of clothing and supplies that students will need for the trip. (JHZ).

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OUTDOOR STUDIES

GENEVA SIXTH GRADES



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Rogers Environmental

Education Center

Sherburne, N.Y.

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STUDENT INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR OUTDOOR STUDIES:

GENEVA SIXTH GRADES

Don F. Mitchinson

Director of Outdoor Studies

May 1, 1983

The Geneva Public Schools

400 W. North Street

Geneva, New York 14456

WHY PROVIDE OUTDOOR OR FIELD EXPERIENCES?

In our ever expanding world, the horizons extend from the classroom, across town and into the country until now man is knocking on the door to space. It is not enough for children to remain in classrooms and look out at the world. They must directly experienced some the excitements, pressures and problems of the world of reality.

To help make real materials which have been presented as symbols in a book or ideas expressed in a discussion, teachers and leaders often provide sensory experiences in the way of field excursions away from the classrooms.

The following are important reasons for utilizing our environment to extend and enhance the school curriculum:

1. To awaken curiosity in preparation for a new area or unit of study. (The teacher, of course, must expect to do something with this newly aroused curiosity upon returning to the classroom.)
2. To stimulate additional interest in a given area or unit of study. (Students now will have some background in the area under study and can ask more penetrating questions.)
3. To culminate an area or unit of study. (Specific learnings on the trip may clarify vague or unclear ideas as well as rekindle interest in further study.)
4. To provide field investigations away from the classroom to collect specimens to bring back for additional study. (Plants, insects, soils and rocks often may best be studied on "location" but some phases lend themselves to classroom-lavatory study.)
5. To provide field investigations for observing and recording data, collected both descriptively and quantitatively in the field. (Differences in the stages of growth in plants or animals, a man's location during a historic event, or the clustering of man near a physical feature--stream or lake.)
6. To utilize the sociological relationships of out-of-school activities to the total school program (man and his work and play.)
7. To gain an esthetic appreciation of a historic event or our natural or cultural environment by studying the site where the phenomena occurred (town meeting place, courtroom, state capitol buildings, battlefield, launching pad.)
8. To raise the level and taste of the student's use of leisure time. (Exposure to leisure time activities, natural and man made, that may be unknown to students.)
9. To better understand and interpret the world about one. (Small facts or bits and pieces become integral parts of the total picture as one's horizon is raised.)

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION?

In order to best answer this question, we should first consider how environmental education relates to conservation instruction and outdoor programs in general. Conservation education is described as education in the wise use of natural resources and has utilized symbols and slogans appealing to a great variety of interest levels. Smokey, the Bear, for example, has crusaded for caution and care in the use of our forests; and Johnn Horizon is the symbol used in anti-litter campaigns. Both outdoor education and conservation education have been associated with particular interests and subject matter areas. For example, those who are most interested in providing more beautiful waterscapes and a purer quality of air have supported certain facets of conservation education. Science and physical education are the school subjects generally used in such programs. Environmental education, however, may include all of the above as significant and relevant to the relationships of our citizens with their immediate surroundings.

Environmental education is a total look at where you live, how you live, and finally, why you live. Environmental education is interdisciplinary, a synthesis of all educational understandings and skills, for the ultimate purpose of environmental education is to provide the most vital awareness possible about our living and non-living surroundings.

Because man is the dominant organism on the earth (not numerically, though he is approaching this type of dominance, too) and can, through his technological manipulations of the environment, control much of its effect and affect, man is the central figure in environmental education. Whether he is cloistered in a subterranean bunker of experimental laboratories in the South Pole, comfortable nested in a penthouse in the midst of an urban setting, or thousands of miles out in space, the environment is a crucial and significant factor in determining the quality of life.

The major objectives of environmental education are to help individuals acquire:

- a clear understanding that man is an inseparable part of a system consisting of man, culture and the bio-physical* environment, and that man has the ability to alter the interrelationships of this system;
- a broad understanding of the bio-physical environment, both natural and man-made;
- a fundamental understanding of a bio-physical environmental problems confronting man, how these problems can be solved, and the need for individual citizens and government agencies to work toward their solution;
- attitudes of concern for the quality of the bio-physical environment which will motivate citizens to participate in bio-physical problem solving.

* Bio-physical is defined as the living (BIO) and the non-living (PHYSICAL) world.

TRANSPORTATION

Students will travel to and from the Rogers Center at Sherburne by school busses. Two busses will be provided to accommodate 50 students and their luggage, with supervision by parent chaperones. Busses will leave from and return to the parking lot of the Middle School off Pulteney Street.

SCHEDULE: Leave Geneva 8:15 a.m.
Arrive Rogers Center 10:45 a.m.
Leave Rogers Center 11:15 a.m.
Arrive Geneva 1:45 p.m.

Students returning to Geneva on Wednesdays or Fridays will be returned to their school in time to take their regular bus run home from school that day.

DRIVING TO SHERBURNE FROM GENEVA:

North on R. 14 to New York State Thruway (5 miles).
East on I 90 to Exit 33, Verona (73 miles).
South via Routes 365, 46, and 12B to Sherbourne (36 miles).
North on Route 80 to Rogers Center (1 mile).

The driving time from Geneva to the Rogers Center is 2 hours and 30 minutes, one way.





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RL SW	141.92
	147.87
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No.	Milepost
56	Orchard Park-Lackawanna-Rt. 219
57	Lackawanna Toll Barrier
58	Bleed-Mile Strip Road
59	Hamburg-Route 79
60	Eden-Angola
61	Silver Creek-Routes 5 & 20
62	Dunkirk-Fredonia-Rt. 90
63	Westfield-Route 17
64	Ripley Toll Barrier
65	Ripley-Routes 5 & 20
66	Pennsylvania Line (I. 90 West)
67	429.47
68	430.51
69	432.45
70	436.22
71	444.87
72	455.54
73	467.74
74	485.00
75	494.51
76	494.80
77	495.50



SUGGESTED PERSONAL ITEMS

The weather at Sherburne in early May is described as partly sunny, windy, occasional rain, with wet or damp trails through wooded or marshy areas. Evenings are cool and often damp. Adequate clothing for these conditions is essential.

NOTE: Two days supply of clothing is necessary. The activities are outdoors in a variety of weather conditions and at different times of the day. Clothing should be adequate to insure students' comfort, health, and safety.

Coat (jacket) and rainwear

Sweater or sweatshirt

Waterproof walking shoes

Sneakers or casual footwear

Two days change of clothing

Extra socks

Hat

Toilet articles: soap, toothbrush, toothpaste
comb and/or brush, personal
hygiene items, towel

Light weight sleeping bag or bedding (blanket and sheets)

Pillow

Suitcase or duffle bag

Pencils, Note Pad or Clipboard

Optional items: Camera and film, binoculars, book(s)

Items provided by school: Food Service, Transportation,
Educational Supplies,
Professional Staff

TELEPHONE FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY: 607-674-9010



SCHEDULE

FIRST DAY

10:30 - 11:15 Set Up in Dorm
11:15 - 11:45 Lunch - Orientation
12:30 - 1:30 A.S.E.
1:30 - 3:00 Activities
3:00 - 3:15 Snack Break
3:15 - 4:45 Activities
4:45 - 5:15 Open
5:15 - 5:45 Dinner
5:45 - 6:30 Open
6:15 - 8:15 Evening Activities
8:45 - 9:45 Special Activity
9:45 - 10:30 Open
10:30 Light Out

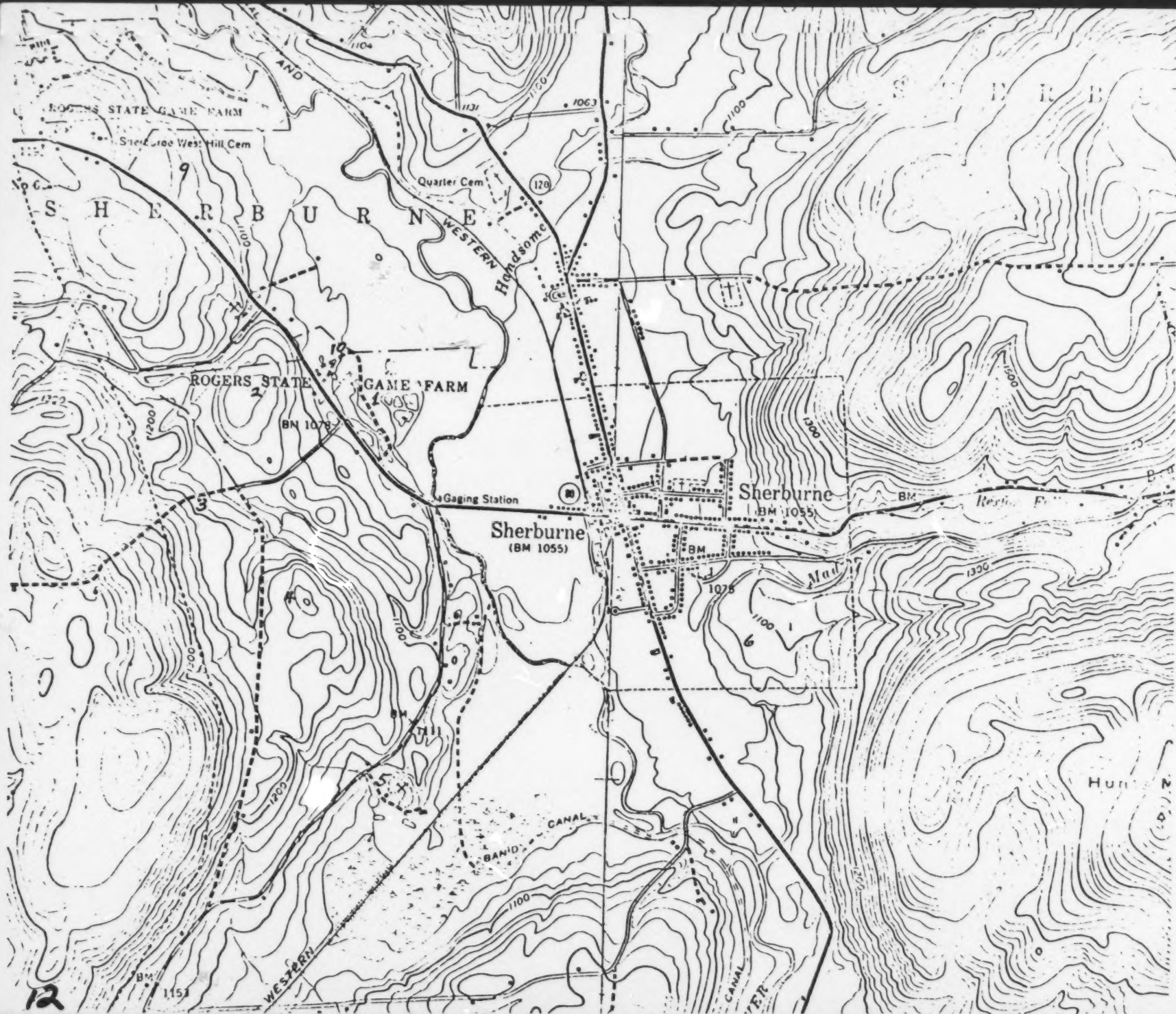
SECOND DAY

7:00 AM Rise and Shine
7:45 - 8:15 Breakfast
8:15 - 8:45 Open
8:45 - 10:15 Activities
10:15 - 10:30 Snack Break

10:30 - 12:00 Activities
12:00 - 12:15 PM, Open
12:15 - 12:45 Lunch
12:45 - 1:45 Rest Period
1:45 - 4:30 Forest Management
4:30 - 5:30 Open
5:30 - 6:30 Cookout
6:15 - 8:15 Evening Activities
8:45 - 9:45 Special Activity
9:45 - 10:30 Open
10:30 Lights Out

THIRD DAY

7:00 AM Rise and Shine
7:45 - 8:15 Breakfast
8:15 - 9:00 Open
9:00 - 10:30 Last look around, talk it over
10:30 - 11:00 Pack Up
11:00 Load Buses
11:15 Depart for Geneva



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DAY TIME ACTIVITIES

	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
0:30-11:15	Set up in dorm - Get acquainted			
11:15 - 11:45	Lunch — Orientation			
12:30-1:30	Action Socialization Experiences			
1:30-3:00	MAP AND COMPASS	BILTMORE STICKS	FORESTRY	POND LIFE
3:15-4:45	POND LIFE	MAP AND COMPASS	BILTMORE STICKS	FORESTRY
2nd Day				
8:45-10:15	FORESTRY	POND LIFE	MAP AND COMPASS	BILTMORE STICKS
10:30-12:00	BILTMORE STICKS	FORESTRY	POND LIFE	MAP AND COMPASS
1:45-4:30	Forest Management			
3rd Day				
9:00-10:30	Last look around the Center			
10:30-11:00	Clear dorm — Load busses			

EVENING ACTIVITIES

6:15-7:15	STREAM BOATS	DAILY BREAD	FOOD CHAINS	1/10,000TH ACRE
7:15-8:15	1/10,000TH ACRE	STREAM BOATS	DAILY BREAD	FOOD CHAINS
8:45-9:45				
2nd Day	WIDE Game			
6:15-7:15	FOOD CHAINS	1/10,000TH ACRE	STREAM BOATS	DAILY BREAD
7:15-8:15	DAILY BREAD	FOOD CHAINS	1/10,000TH ACRE	STREAM BOATS
8:45-9:45				
	Campfire			

ROGERS CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER AT SHERBURNE --

A VERY SPECIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

By Don F. Mitchinson ... Science Coordinator, Geneva Public Schools

My first glimpse of the Rogers Center was a bleak, exposed winter environ which seemed a most unlikely place to pursue the subject of outdoor education. The dormitory too seemed cold and inhospitable. In fact, the only warmth exhibited was in the personality of the Rogers Staff, who were obviously delighted to share their "very special place" with a group of teachers from across the state who had gathered for a workshop sponsored by the New York State Outdoor Education Association in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

As the workshop progressed, it soon became apparent that this was indeed a special place. It did not have any limiting boundaries such as the confines of a classroom in winter. Instead, the whole 288 acres was itself a classroom, and no one, regardless of their years in education, was excluded from the ongoing learning that takes place there every minute of every day.

Formal classes are minimized, and small group experiences are emphasized. Observation is the key. Listening, watching, feeling, and reasoning are all part of this "sensing" experience which every visitor to the Center recognizes. A few feet down any of the many trails and one is engulfed with a complete solitude rarely experienced. You soon learn what an awareness of nature is.

The residents of the area, both plant and animal, are relatively immune to the minor intrusions of a few visitors at a time. There is no sense of invasion, but rather one of sharing a unique opportunity to be a part of the living environment.

I was also aware of the great vitality of the Rogers Staff. While they were obviously proud of the Center, they were completely willing to share it with anyone who so desired. The interpretation program, whether two small groups or on a one-to-one basis, never stopped.

At the end of the weekend, we all returned to our homes and schools. For me, there was yet an unanswered question about the Rogers Center ... had I really experienced something out of the ordinary that kept coming back to me, or was it merely an enthusing and inspiring experience shared with the other participants. I had to find out!

A few weekends later I revisited the Center with my family. Fortunately, the Conservation Educator, Herm Weiskotten was there. It was a snowy, Saturday afternoon, and he had been out checking on some animal tracks that he planned to show to a school group. He took us under his wing for a while, pointing out features of the environment much like a proud gardener presents his outstanding creations to a guest. Then, he let us strike out on our own.

I soon found myself assuming the teaching role, leading my own youngsters through the trails to visit a variety of ecosystems and habitats. They enthusiastically joined in, and before we knew it, the day was gone, and we headed home. However, I now had my answer ... my experience before had not been a one-time thing. This place had something very special to offer, and if I was to truly provide a superior learning experience to my students, I must include the Rogers Center in the curriculum.

That was quite a few years ago. There are many new faces on the staff at Rogers now. John Weeks, the first director, has taken on new and challenging work in the field of outdoor education. Herm Weiskotten is gone. But the concept of Rogers remains ... a "special place" for all ages to get close to Nature, and to come away with a clearer understanding and appreciation of the environment and their relationship to it.

We began using the facilities of the Rogers Center for sixth graders of the Geneva Public Schools in 1974. It has proven to be an original learning experience for both the students and the teachers.

The youngsters travel to Sherburne by bus, arriving about 11 a.m. on either Monday or Wednesday of the weeks we are there. Assigned duties give each child a sense of responsibility and of sharing. It is a true experience in democratic living.

The activities are selected to fully utilize the environment of the Center. Such daytime activities as Life in the Pond, Animal Habitats, Orienteering, and Forestry keep the students on the move ... looking, listening, feeling and experiencing.

In the evenings, programs are conducted at the outdoor amphitheater or in the dormitory. These may include Contour Mapping, Sounds in Nature, a Values Auction, or a presentation on the Furbearers of New York State.

Three miles of trails radiate from this building to all points of interest in the Center property. Most of the estimated 250 school groups that use the trails each year comment on the variety of wildlife seen along these walkways.

Special features along the trails include a walk-in group blind, photographic blinds, a raised walkway that goes out over the marsh, game feeders, numerous bridges, rest benches, a river-side trail, a covered group shelter, and a number of exhibits which help to reveal the biology of the area.

All woodland trails are covered with shredded bark and all trails which traverse meadows are mowed. This helps limit the damage to plants by restricting the wanderings of the trail walkers. The benefits in terms of maintenance and safety, more than compensate for the "esthetic disadvantages," if any.

These trails have a minimum of interpretive signs. Instead, a printed guide keyed to numbers placed along the trails is provided for walkers. This permits the use of trails for class instruction without the distraction of printed markers.

The Nature Center is separated from the Picnic and Live Demonstration Areas by a series of Ponds. The principal access is by footbridge across the long, narrow "Ice Pond." Spruce Ridge Trail provides an alternative route to or from the building.

The Rogers Center is 51 miles from Syracuse, 52 miles north from Binghamton and 32 miles south of Utica. To reach the Center from U.S. Route 20, eastbound, go south from Cazenovia 31 miles by Routes 13 (to Sheds) and 80 to the Rogers area or eastbound on Route 20 to Hamilton, south on Route 46 and Route 12B to Sherbourne, and north on Route 80 one mile to the Rogers area. The general area is open 365 days a year, and the Center Buildings are open week days from 8:30 to 4:30.

The Rogers Center proper consists of nearly 290 acres approximately one mile west of Sherburne on Route 80. It is divided into three major portions; (1) Picnic - Live Demonstration Area, (2) Nature Center, and (3) Conservation Demonstration Farm. Another property, the Adams Farm, is a relatively undeveloped area located some distance to the west of the main Rogers Center property.

The property also contains two residences, a group of storage and service buildings, and a parcel of land under control of the Division of Lands and Forests in which headquarters for Forest District No. 2 are located.

The Picnic, Live-Demonstration Area is principally a place where they may enjoy an outing, and if they choose, may learn something of our native plants and animals and their management. It contains an 80-car parking lot, picnic facilities, and two ponds containing excellent specimens of lake, brook, brown and rainbow trout.

Below the trout ponds is a pond devoted to a display of native waterfowl, and to several varieties of their domestic offspring. It is not the atmosphere of a caged exhibit because there is constant movement in and out by the wild waterfowl.

Nearby, in cages, are displayed some of the more important of our upland game birds, as well as many members of the pheasant family.

To the south of the picnic area a short nature trail, well marked with illustrated signs, introduces a few basic ecological concepts. The trail traverses a spruce covered ridge, passes a small unmanaged pond, a geologic display and eventually leads to the Education Building which is the heart of the Nature Center.

The Nature Center occupies about 75 acres of the Chenango River bottom land. It contains a variety of natural situations including ponds, marshes, open fields and woodlands. The east and south boundaries are bordered by the Chenango River.

Against the eastern edge of the 6½ acre Channels Marsh stand the Education Building. It contains two laboratories, an exhibit and meeting room, a library, an administrative complex, and an unusual wildlife viewing gallery with large windows which face out upon the marsh and a number of bird and wildlife feeders.

A sound amplification system permits the "piping" in of sounds from the marsh and feeders. It is also possible to use the system for taped or recorded programs.

When not involved in group activity or housekeeping responsibilities, the students have time for a game of softball or basketball, a call home to Mom and Dad, or just a few quiet moments to reflect on the days activities.

The end of the day may include a songfest at the campfire circle in the pine grove, star observation, a night walk, and finally a bedtime snack. Lights-out is also an important part of the program, because after two full days of such a schedule, two extremes become evident. The interest level is waxing, but the energy level is waning.

Pre-site and post-site activities are planned for classroom teachers to take advantage of their pupils self-motivation toward independent studies. Teachers who accompany the group to Sherburne experience a teacher workshop before the trip, to plan programs and detail responsibilities.

In addition to the follow-up that takes place in school after the trip, there is yet another positive part of the program. I know many students who have convinced their families that the Rogers Center would be an ideal place for them to visit on a weekend excursion. This gives them an opportunity to share their experiences in the out-of-doors with their family, as I did with mine. And so ... the cycle continues.



MAP OF ROGERS CENTER
FACILITIES AND TRAILS

Major Trails

- 1. Channel Trail
- 2. South Trail
- 3. Boundary Trail
- - - - - Other Trails

to Village of
Sherburne

Chenango
River

Route 80

L. Dormitory
M. Barn
N. DEC Workshop

Facilities

- A. Parking
- B. Picnic Pav.
- C. Bird Exhibit
- D. Duck Pond
- E. Trout Pond
- F. Amphitheater
- G. Hatchery
- H. Rangers Hdqtrs.
- I. Observ. Tower
- J. Log Cabin

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